

STATE BOARD OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES
Contract for Student Assistance Program

Request: The State Board of Community Colleges is asked to approve a contract for system-wide access to a Student Assistance Program for students at all 58 community colleges in an amount not to exceed \$950,000.

Strategic Plan Reference:

Theme: Clear and Supported Pathways for Student Progress and Success

Goal 2: Provide a continuum of education, training, advising, and support to help learners make informed decisions that lead to credentials and careers.

- Objective 2: Provide integrated, targeted support services that promote student success.

Background: The 58 colleges of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) are positioned to serve North Carolina's workforce as they face the economic challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. However, students will be facing more challenges than ever balancing school, work, life, and the additional stressors of the pandemic.

A Student Assistance Program, similar to an employee assistance program, provides students with 24/7 access to confidential and professional services for students and household members who may be experiencing personal, medical, or other concerns, and can connect students to longer-term resources when appropriate. In addition, programs often offer access to work-life, legal, and financial services for students as well. While many of the System's colleges provide on-site counseling services or connect students to community partners, a systemwide contract would ensure that students at all colleges have access to a high quality, remote option during this difficult time.

Rationale for Contract: If approved, the System Office would leverage existing state contracts providing similar services to state employees to expedite the provision of these critical services for North Carolina's community college students for the 2020-21 school year. The services would be available to all students 18 and older regardless of academic level or program of study.

Method of Procurement: In accordance with the procurement practice of the State of North Carolina, approval by outside purchasing authorities is required. State Board approval is contingent upon approval of the Department of Administration Division of Purchase and Contract.

Fund Source and Availability: Funding is available through the 2020 COVID-19 Recovery Act (Session Law 2020-4) and is contingent upon certification of these funds by the Office of State Budget and Management.

Contact:

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